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NOVEMBER 1983 ..... Issue No: 1

Do you remember how awesome African bush fires can be as they sweep through an area greedily consuming trees, leaves, grass and flowers, completely denuding the beautiful foliage of the African savannah? Did you ever wonder how anything survived that holocaust? And yet, year after year, even before the first rains, the elephant grass would thrust out a blade, the tree branches would send out a shoot, and flowers would burst open on the forest floor.

Likewise, SIM ROOTS is coming alive after lying dormant for two years!

In case you have forgotten, SIM ROOTS began with a dream. A dream that a few people had in 1979 to bring together as many MK's as possible for a reunion. To meet that dream, there had to be a means by which to spread the word. Thus SIM ROOTS began. SIM ROOTS had a goal, a reason for its existence. It was the reunion. It was called "The Big Idea". I remember the very first mailing. There were less than 30 people on the mailing list. But it grew and grew and grew. By the time the reunion was held in July 1981, there were 1305 people on the mailing list. And I believe that there should be at least another 1000 people out there whom we don't have on the mailing list that are alumni of the SIM schools in Africa. And, of course, each graduating year should add a few more people whom we hope would want to be a part of SIM ROOTS.

That original goal has been met. The reunion was held and was very successful. But that left SIM ROOTS without a reason to exist. So SIM ROOTS has been silent. What purpose does SIM ROOTS now have for its existence? If we do not have a reason to exist, if we don't have a message to give, if we won't reach out to help, then SIM ROOTS must surely pass silently away.

For SIM ROOTS to survive, we must have a new dream, a new goal, something new for which to strive. If SIM ROOTS is to be just a newsletter to pass on news from one person to another, wouldn't it be



easier, cheaper, and faster to pick up the telephone? Something then, must hold us together. That common root is the fact that we are MK's whose common heritage is SIM. It is only natural then that SIM ROOTS should be a publication of, by and for SIM's MK's. However, it will be only as good as you make it.

During the business meeting portion of the 1981 reunion, a number of objectives were voiced by the participants. Let me remind you of what they were: 1) The sharing of news among ourselves, 2) To raise money for special projects both at home and abroad, 3) To fulfill spiritual and material needs of each other and the SIM, and 4) To be an encouraging body for high school grads just returning from Africa and be an umbrella for them—to share similar experiences through the issues of SIM ROOTS and through our personal involvement.

For a good portion of our lives we have been on the receiving end. Now as adults, perhaps it is time to accept the responsibility of giving. Let me share with you a reason for SIM ROOTS not only to stay alive, but to become a vital participant in a specific ministry.

The heart of it is found in a communication I received recently from Bob Blaschke, SIM missionary to Benin. The following is a summary of this communication:

"MK's are great!"

"But they have special needs!"

"How come?"

"Just because they hear that they are coming 'home' for college, when all the time they think their real home is overseas!"

"Sound confusing?"

"So what's home? And where's home?"

It is a known fact that MK's often have a difficult time making the transition from high school overseas to life on the college campus and afterwards in the

homeland.

Therefore, in order to be of assistance to returning MK's, SIM has committed itself to develop a caring ministry to MK's. A ministry to help MK's sort out these and other things that may be confusing and disruptive. This assistance will take the form of providing information, people and program resources supportive of MK's.

Many papers and theses have been written on the subject. Psychologists have been having their say, too. Mission leaders are becoming sensitized as to their responsibility. But when you come down to it, it is the MK who knows the subject...he has lived it! MK's are a 'gold mine' of a wealth of experience needing to be tapped in order to help others still 'coming up the road'. You never know, just talking about it might even do something for you yourself.

There are crucial areas to be talked about. For example, the transitional period beginning with graduation from high school overseas into the first couple of years of college in the homeland. These years have been traumatic for some. What was traumatic about it for you? How did you handle it?

Information will be gathered, collated and made available to MK's, their parents and other caring individuals to help them prepare themselves prior to departure from overseas, care for their needs during college as well as after their college days. This information would be made available through the printed page, personal visits by SIM or SIM-related personnel and in seminars and reunions.

A full-time coordinator for this ministry will eventually be required. This person will form a team of interested, concerned and informed volunteers who will be responsible for and perform the various aspects of the ministry. The team will be composed of mission administrators, regional directors, former and current missionaries, "former" MK's, pastors, church leaders and families with open homes and hearts. College personnel and



professional people such as doctors and lawyers would also be engaged to form a network of caring people prepared to meet MK's needs on a short or long term basis.

Bob Blaschke, Sr., having five kids of his own, is on loan from the SIM to LeTourneau College where he is missionary-in-residence, teaching, counseling and ministering to the needs of the 120 MK's on campus, of which 12 are SIM. In addition, Bob has been assigned by SIM to coordinate this MK ministry and do whatever needs to be done to help MK's reorient themselves.

Programs will be designed to be supportive of the MK. There will be re-entry seminars, adopt-an-MK program in local churches, reunions, telephone hotline-for-help, a catalogue of caring people, financial aid and routine visits of MK's on college campuses and elsewhere.

Can SIM ROOTS help in this ministry to each other? Can you, in particular, help in this ministry? If you have insights or problems and are willing to share them, contact Bob Blaschke at 604 Evelyn Drive, Longview, Texas 75602 (214-757-9155). He would be glad to hear from you.

SIM ROOTS needs to come alive and become the voice of this ministry!

Thought for the day: "Rules without relationship result in rebellion." Have you experienced it? OK, now, how's it going with you or with you and your kids?

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There will not be any personal letters in this issue of SIM ROOTS. There are quite a few on file (enough to make up about 21 pages, in fact) since the last issue of SIM ROOTS went out in July of 1980. But they are all old letters. Unless somebody really wants to read them, they will all be severely edited and then included in the next issue of SIM ROOTS.

Now that SIM ROOTS is trying for a comeback, it is our goal to publish a letter three times a year (that's every four months). Please help make this a successful ministry -- EVERYONE NEEDS EVERYONE'S HELP!! Nobody can go it alone for very long. I always thought that I could, but I've found out it is no fun being alone.

If you have any information in regard to this new ministry, send it to Bob Blaschke. All other information and letters should be sent to me. Our addresses are on the front page.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - births, deaths, weddings, retirements and other things.

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MRS. JEAN HODGES retired in the summer of 1982 after many years of teaching at K.A. She is residing in Edmonton, Alberta.

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Weighing in at 7 lbs., 12 oz. and measuring 19 inches in length, Sharon Esther was born to KAREN (SEEGER) & Scott Keegan on September 2, 1981, at 7:33 p.m.

\* \* \* \* \*

DIANNE BALISKY and TIM FULLER were married July 11, 1981.

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ALLEN STEELY married Marcia Limkenman on May 30, 1981.

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JOYCE RATZLAFF and Doug Miller were married on May 9, 1981.

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PATTI WARKENTIN and John Coster were married March 6, 1982.

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ESTHER STADE and Royal Hobbs were married May 9, 1982. They are making their home in Edmonton, Alberta.

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We express our condolences to the RHINES--JOHN, EDITH & JANET--on the death of their father in the spring of 1982.

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Condolences to DAVID, RUTH & MARK MAXWELL on the death of their parents on February 2, 1982. They were killed in an automobile accident in Canada. Mr. & Mrs. Maxwell were regional reps of S.I.M.

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BOB BLASCHKE, JR. and CHARLENE HIDE are united in marriage.

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E X T R A . . . E X T R A

R E A D   A L L   A B O U T   I T

R E U N I O N   1 9 8 5

How many of you were at the last reunion in 1981? Was it worth it? Do you want to do it again? Did you know that there were over 500 attendees on the Saturday of that reunion? I have a photograph of that assembly hanging on my wall. It took eight 35mm frames in panoramic sequence to capture the group during the photo session. Carefully assembled, it results in a photo two feet wide! I doubt if any of them did not feel that it was worthwhile to attend that reunion. I am not aware of any single event associated with either the Hillcrest school or the SIM schools where there has been that many alumni gathered. We want to see even more at the next reunion. Will you help us to meet that goal?

Well, the executive committees of both the SIM and the Hillcrest Alumni Associations have been in conference to answer the following six basic English questions: Who, What, When, Where, How and Why. Here's what we came up with.

WHO?....You, the combined constituents of the SIM and the Hillcrest Alumni Associations.

WHAT?....A bigger and better and more fun filled reunion than the last time. Again, a combined effort between both associations.

WHEN?....We are aiming for the July 4 weekend in 1985. The July 4 weekend will be a long weekend for Americans. We understand the difficulties that non Americans had the last time and will have again this time and we remain in sympathy with you, but to gain the extra day that we would like to include into the reunion, we are again going for the American independence holiday weekend. We are proposing that the reunion begin on a Thursday evening and continue through Sunday noon, thus adding a day to the usual reunion weekend of Friday evening to Sunday noon.

WHERE?....We again want to reunite at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. Geographically speaking, the midwest region still holds the lead with the largest body of alumni of both associations within a single days' driving distance to Wheaton. In order to attract the largest number of attendees, we are making arrangements with Wheaton College to have our reunion at their facilities.

HOW & WHY?....It will have to be up to you to fill in these answers. We hope that you will mark your calendar and begin making plans to attend. We would like to see you there.